

Entertainment

Local director's tale of greed is festival choice

BY WARREN WOODBERRY JR.

Cambria Heights filmmaker Ramcess Jean-Louis unites the corruption of "Wall Street" with the sexual mischief of "Sex, Lies and Videotape" in "Sarbane's Oxley," a tale of mistresses, mergers and mayhem.

Next month, Jean-Louis will introduce audiences to the behind-the-scenes scandals of corporate America when his 90-minute film makes its world premiere at the Eighth Annual Hollywood Black Film Festival in Beverly Hills.

"Sarbane's Oxley" is set against the backdrop of today's business headlines and highlights how lives are affected by the acquisition of a financial technology startup on Wall Street.

"The purpose of the movie is to show people what happens when people violate basic principles of honesty and fair play," said Jean-Louis, 34, a former prosecutor.

"It's a story I thought was important and needed to be told," the director added.

Jean-Louis said the title of his film is derived from a federal law that prevents corporate misconduct such as what happened during the Enron scandal. The film's lead character, Robert, played by actor Shane Taylor, is an ambitious attorney who is the office star, engaged to his soul mate Christian, played by actress Noelle Neglia.

Robert's company is abruptly acquired by a large firm run by the powerful and controlling Arthur, played by actor Ian Jarvis.

Robert quickly finds himself caught in a web of lies, greed and betrayal which threatens to destroy his professional life.

"'Sarbane's Oxley' shows that greed is still good and it still exists in corporate America," said Jean-Louis, who co-wrote the production with his wife Bennitta.



Director Ramcess Jean-Louis wrote "Sarbane's Oxley" with wife Bennitta. Photo by Frank Koester

Viewers may recognize Taylor from his performances in soap operas and commercials. He has been likened to a young Laurence Fishburne.

Jarvis has played roles in off-Broadway productions and had a bit part in HBO's "The Sopranos."

"This movie kind of examines what happens when you disobey certain principles," said Jean-Louis who, with his wife, self-financed the film, which was shot mostly in Manhattan. "I made it more urban, more compelling and more sexy."

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